

ALARM BELL IN BERLIN

In these resounding days, when we have felt it possible to ring church bells and when it seems that we can almost hear the trumpets sound, our eyes have been on the southern shores of our Middle Sea and the northern coast of what was called in our school-books Darkest Africa. Strange that the ancient world of Africa should come to the aid of stricken Europe. With West Africa on the side of the Allies, the whole continent must soon be lost to the Axis. So dramatic a spectacle could hardly fail to stir men's minds, as it must stir the mind of the historian.

Dawn and Dusk of 1942

Yet this vast change in the fortunes of the war should not blind us to the fighting arenas far away, where mighty blows have been struck and mighty victories won. If Rommel in his flight of sixty miles a day has left behind not less than eighty thousand men and thousands of pieces of armour, his jackal's fleet has been afraid to move in a decisive hour, and far off in the Pacific the Japs have fled and left their ships strewn on the ocean bed.

The year opened with the yellow race dominating these vast waters. It was our darkest hour since the collapse of France and the unthinkable bitterness of Dunkirk. The tragedy of Pearl Harbour was succeeded by the tragedy of our two great battleships; Allied power in the Far East was shattered at two blows, and the fall of Hong Kong, Singapore, Java, and Burma cast their dread shadows before them. The pride of the English-speaking race was stricken, and Australia itself was menaced by the hordes so suddenly become the Masters of the East.

BUT the year is ending with the curtain rising on another scene. America draws thousands of miles nearer to the war along the Alaska Road, and her Aleutian Islands stretch out with ever-growing promise. The Battle of Midway Island, which set the Japanese thinking, has been followed by the wondrous news from the Solomons, where warships in dozens lie rotting in the ooze. In Papua, as we call our own part of New Guinea, the Japs have been pursued through the Owen Stanley Range and down to the haven of their ships, and Australians and Americans have joined hands in driving them from this ocean stronghold. The clouds that gathered over Australia at the gate of the year are pierced with the sun's bright rays, and our southern Dominions are stirred to the depths by the passing of the gravest peril that ever reached their shores.

Mighty Russia

And Russia? Mighty Russia? The drama there moves on from scene to scene. Act One, with Leningrad and Moscow reeling, ended with the German Army perishing in the cold. Act Two will end for them, we may be sure, in unparalleled discomfiture and ignominious defeat. The news comes from the Caucasus that the Nazi hosts are going the way of Rommel, retreating fast; and as for Stalingrad, there is no word for it. To the end of the story of freedom Stalingrad will stand for the height of endeavour, the limit of endurance, the majesty of the human spirit refusing to be annihilated by the concentration of fire and steel.

For a year and more the Russians have borne the brunt of the savagery of the Huns. They have seen war turned into murder. They have stood like a living wall of granite

two thousand miles long. They have scorched their fair lands and seen them befouled by the filthiest army the earth has ever known. They have burned down their cities to save them from the teeth and claws of the Nazi Beast. They have seen their people maimed and tortured and starved to death for no other crime than the defence of their homes.

HUNDREDS of thousands of miles of their country have been made into a wilderness. Their harvest fields have been destroyed, their oil wells menaced, their fleet cut off, their great industrial region overwhelmed. Never was so much metal thrown against a people; never was so much might opposed by so great valour. Week after week, month after month, out of one year into another, the threatened capital and its sister cities have withstood the whole power of the German Army, built up through eight remorseless years while other nations slept.

When Nazis Meet the Strong

And what of this brutal machine that flings itself so pitilessly against these brave defenders of their homes? It was this machine that mowed down Poland, Norway, Holland, Belgium, Bohemia, Yugo-Slavia, Greece, little countries all; never was it so efficient as in trampling down small lands and helpless peoples, crushing old and young beneath its tanks and blowing out of existence the familiar scenes they had loved since their childhood. The heart of Rotterdam it blew to pieces in an afternoon, leaving thirty thousand dead. Warsaw it turned into a bloodstained shambles. Belgrade it crucified amid shrieks of triumph. Lidice it blotted off the map after murdering every man and scattering every family in it. It was the Nazi way of making holiday, this horde with Cain in its armies, Caligula in its chariot, and Nero in its planes.

WHAT is it that has happened to this murderous force that tramples every little country down? What happens to it when it meets a country able to resist? Then its vaunted prowess wilts away, and in its rout it flings its allies to the wolves. It is invincible no longer when it meets a strong resistance. It is outfought by superior troops. It breaks itself against the impregnable rock of Russian fortitude. The truth is that the German Army has lost its reputation for being invincible. The RAF destroyed the legend in the air; the Russians have destroyed it on the land.

Glory of Stalingrad

This mighty army which began the war by taking a country every week now cannot take a street. Everywhere Russia is flinging it back. A marvellous spectacle it has been to see the monstrous hordes of Hitler, trained to butchery without mercy, flinging themselves in vain against the rock of Stalingrad. Its ruins smoulder, its streets are battered down, its back is to the Volga; but it holds. Months ago the German broadcaster informed the world that Stalingrad had fallen. Months ago Hitler pledged himself before his people that it would be captured. But it holds. It holds as Moscow holds, as Leningrad holds, a year and more after the German's proud boast that they were doomed. This Juggernaut that would destroy all Europe, that has brought down country after country, seeks in vain to crush these Russian peasants clinging to their scorched earth. They have made a laughing-stock of Hitler and his solemn word.

CHILDREN'S NEWSPAPER

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EDITED BY ARTHUR MEE

The Empire's Donkey

THE story of Gibraltar's thrilling part in the assembly and dispatch for French North Africa of the greatest of all modern armadas lacks one detail: we have not been informed so far how the Empire's donkey took it, and whether he had an extra carrot in celebration.

Donkeys never die, we say, so he must still be there. He is an animal of distinction in that he is the only one of his tribe to figure in the returns of the Army as "on the strength."

Just before the outbreak of the war the official census of animals showed that the Army possessed

11,650 horses, 818 mules, one ox (which drew the dust-cart in Mauritius), and one donkey at Gibraltar. Its placid task is to act as laundry conveyor for the garrison, and, judging by the increase in the numbers of men there, his task must have been greatly multiplied.

We cannot imagine him as galloping about the Rock in the discharge of his duties, for donkey dignity and extravagant speed do not go together. But we know he is equal to his task, like the men he serves, or he would not enjoy the renown of official recognition.

The Flying Soldier



An RAF pilot of Army Cooperation Command climbing aboard his Mustang, a very fast American-built machine

Continued from the previous column

They have smashed to pieces the legend that the Nazis can do anything they like. They have made it clear to all the world that the German Army is good at crushing helpless States but is helpless itself whenever it meets a nation strongly armed. What a page it is for history, this struggle of Hitler and his hordes to take a few houses in the burning streets of Stalingrad at the cost of thousands of lives! The bully begins to wince. The Axis alarm bell rings.

It is the glory of Stalingrad

to have exploded the myth of Hitler's unbeatable hordes; it is the glory of Russia to have put out of action eight million German soldiers. Not a mean achievement for an army which Hitler himself declared to be annihilated in 1941. Well may we believe that this great country, holding its own with such unparalleled valour, will drive the enemy from its borders and seek just retribution for his crimes. Well may we believe that mighty Russia will be as great an Ally in the peace as she has been and will be in the war. Arthur Mee

OLD JOHN BROWN

Man Who Sang at His Funeral

*John Brown's body lies a-mouldering in the grave,
But his soul goes marching on.*

THERE has just passed away at the age of 102 a man who sat on John Brown's knee, and sang at his funeral.

John Brown was hanged on December 2, 1859, for an act of rebellion, he having attempted to seize the arsenal at Harper's Ferry in Virginia. All the world loves the old man today, but he was a rebel against authority, urged on by his passionate hatred of slavery. He felt that anything was right against a government that allowed slavery, and it was in the days when Abraham Lincoln was coming forward that John Brown took his stand. He was arrested and hanged, and the tragedy caused great grief among thousands of people.

But there is no doubt that John Brown was wrong; his action was as mad as that of the suffragettes in this country who burned down houses and churches because they wanted the vote. Such people are the enemies of their own cause, setting about things in the wrong way. Even Abraham Lincoln could have no sympathy with John Brown. There was one way of getting rid of slavery, he said, and that was to abolish it by lawful means.

As John Brown left his cell for the scaffold his cell companion bade him farewell, and said,

"Good-bye, Captain; I know you are going to a better land," and Brown said, "I know I am." He wrote on a slip of paper, "I, John Brown, am now quite certain that the crimes of this guilty land will never be purged away but by blood," and then he walked to the scaffold. The man who was to murder Abraham Lincoln was among the soldiers on guard.

They buried him in a spot he had chosen at the foot of a rock a few yards from his door, and Lyman Epps, the man who has just died, was at the funeral as a young man of 19, and took part in the singing of Brown's favourite hymn, "Blow ye the trumpet, blow." He had lulled his little ones to sleep with it, and now it sounded for him in his long sleep.

He was a good man if ever a man was, but he tried to do good in the wrong way, and bitterly he was punished; but still today pilgrims come to his grave.

*And grey old men will point the spot
Beneath the pine-tree shade,
As children ask with streaming eyes*

Where Old John Brown is laid.

Old and New Wonders

Many people will have been disappointed by the failure of the Brains Trust to deal seriously with the question as to what are the modern wonders of the world, and a correspondent sends us this note on the subject.

THE Brains Trust missed an opportunity. They did not record the names of the ancient Seven; if they had done so, they might have helped the modern listener to observe the striking change in the nature of what can fill us with wonder.

The ancient wonders were the Pyramids, the Colossus of Rhodes, the Lighthouse of Alexandria, the Mausoleum at Halicarnassus, the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, the Statue of Zeus by Phidias and the Temple of Diana at Ephesus. These great monuments, for the most part, applied art to the praise of unknown gods or to the tombs of mighty monarchs.

How different the wonders of today, concerned as they are with the application of human powers to the life and needs of the multitude! At the Brains Trust meeting it was left to a lady member to put her finger on what is undoubtedly the greatest and most far-reaching wonder of engineering—the internal-combustion engine, a veritable Father of Wonders.

THE FIRST ARMY'S CRUSADE

THE emblem of the First Army in North Africa is a shield bearing a red cross and a sword.

General Anderson, the First Army's Commander, declares that its task is to get the Germans right out of Africa. "Our fathers of old were never ashamed to ask God's blessing on their enterprises," he said;

Here is a marvel which is recasting the world of men, changing our conception of transportation by land and sea and making possible the construction of flying machines for peace and war. We may well put it first in any list of modern wonders.

The second place might be given to the discovery of radio-activity, associating the great name of the Curies with it. This is a wonder which is growing under our eyes.

For the third wonder we may name the new conception of Matter as a function of electricity.

Then we may name the Kinema, extraordinarily wonderful in its value in amusement and education and its effect on society.

Wireless claims a place because of its technical ingenuity and its marvellous and far-reaching possibilities.

Medicine could claim no place in wonder in the ancient world, but today the human body is magically yielding its secrets; important functions unknown only 50 years ago are now under control.

Finally, we may name the printing press, despite all abuses, as a growing wonder which makes or mars so much of our world.

"let us therefore unashamedly and humbly ask God's help in our endeavours, and strive to deserve it."

On the day before landing, a religious service was held at which attendance was voluntary, but we hear that the men turned up in greater numbers than the space could accommodate.

The Miracle

Far beyond the bounds of civilisation is a hut among the foothills of the Himalayas. It stands on the edge of the Chinese Republic, a spot wholly cut off from the great world beyond.

It was in this hut that a baby girl lay dying. She had pneumonia, and her father, a British missionary, was enough of a doctor to recognise that the crisis was approaching. No medical aid was available, and the nearest hospital was hundreds of miles away. The child must die.

But her father would not give up hope. He went down on his knees and prayed, and it is simple truth that before he stood up again he heard a sound which almost alarmed him, so unusual was it in that part of the world. A plane was approaching, making a forced landing near the village. The pilot came down within a few hundred yards of the hut where the missionary's baby was gasping for breath, and in the plane were oxygen tanks. It was the use of these which in three days saved the child's life.

Kabaka's Crown

His Highness, the Kabaka of Buganda has a new crown. The Kabaka, whose coronation took place not long ago, is the native Christian ruler of the Buganda province of Uganda Protectorate, and the crown is a gift from the British Government. The work of our royal goldsmiths, the crown is studded with sapphires and other precious stones, and has on the silver-gilt scrollwork the arms of Uganda set against a white satin background, edged with crimson velvet. An ostrich plume in front gives the crowning touch of majesty.

The Kabaka must be a very proud man. May his head never be uneasy beneath this crown.

THE TIDE FLOWS ON

The coming over to the Allies of French West Africa, including the all-important port of Dakar, is a dramatic sequel to the Allied landings in the North. It brings almost all Africa under Allied control and robs the Nazis of their chief opportunities for supplying the U-boats in the Atlantic.

Coming with the stupendous Russian victories outside Stalingrad and in the Caucasus, it is the rising tide indeed, gathering momentum day by day and hour by hour to overwhelm the enemies of freedom.

Meanwhile Montgomery's Eighth Army marches forward, the First Army is consolidating and fighting near the key-port of Bizerta, and the future has wonders to reveal.

A Chap of 84

Essex, that county so queerly unexplored in many parts, but covered at last by the new volume of the King's England, is full of character and ancient strength, and has a tale to tell us of these days which all will like.

As a county it stands high in the longevity tables of Britain. The other day a vigorous-looking man of apparently late middle age entered an employment exchange and asked for a job, explaining that he was over 65.

He was directed to a neighbouring war factory. In a couple of hours he was back at the exchange to report.

"I've got a job," he told the manager. "Four-pounds-ten a week—not bad for a chap of 84."

LITTLE NEWS REELS

GENERAL MONTGOMERY has always a copy of The Pilgrim's Progress in his pocket.

Toby, the dog postman who every day for ten years followed the postmen of Toowong in Queensland on their rounds, has been laid to rest in the post office grounds with a stone and an inscription in his memory.

Cadet Sergeant W. P. Kilby, a farmer's boy of Isleham in Norfolk, raised a complete A T C Flight of more than 30 cadets almost single-handed.

The first women street sweepers since the last war have appeared in Northern towns.

SCHOOLBOYS and girls have saved the potato crop in the York district, working tirelessly in the fields during a fortnight allowed them from school. They have picked 3500 tons of potatoes.

At a London police court it was stated that a lorry-driver spent 33s a week on smoking and drinking.

A correspondent tells us of a little girl taking her doll, all dressed up, to a Red Cross sale because her brother was on a minesweeper.

A cat imprisoned at Detroit in the crate of a Diesel engine jumped out on the crate's arrival in the Middle East with four kittens born on the way!

Scout and Guide News Reel

THE Cornwell Scout Decoration has been awarded to 13-year-old Billy Hughes, of the 22nd Greenwich Troop, who, in spite of three operations, always replied to inquiries that he was "Very well, thank you."

The 1st Bridgend (Glamorgan) Wolf Cubs have collected so much waste-paper that they have been able to buy a trek-cart to collect it in and a press for packing the paper; they have also paid off the debt on their headquarters.

Headquarters has already received a request from Malta for members of the new Guide International Service to work in the stricken island when hostilities cease.

The Archbishop of York declares that the Church must do something to reduce the contrast between incomes of the clergy.

Half of Canada's population of 11 millions are engaged in war work.

There is a factory somewhere in North-Eastern England run entirely by women.

Bees have stored more than a hundredweight of honey in the belfry of Hellidon Church, Northamptonshire.

REINDEER haul bombs, petrol, and other supplies to the aerodromes in the far north of the Russian front.

A new seam of the best steam coal has been found near Nottingham.

In guarding the great armada to North Africa the R A F flew a mileage equivalent to fifty times round the world.

A table used by Napoleon at St Helena has been sold for the Red Cross and realised £178.

Wolves have been creating such havoc in parts of Quebec that the Government has offered five dollars for each wolf killed.

One of the peal of 12 bells which were rung at Lincoln Cathedral to mark the victory of the Allied Forces in Egypt bears the inscription: "Britannia—America, with one voice and one mind."

Two Bristol Guides and a Brownie, Maureen Pobjoy, 12, and Betty and Kathleen Hewitt, 11 and 8, have raised £145 for the Red Cross since war began by selling dolls and toys.

A Bring-and-Buy Sale organised by 1st Appleby Brownies enabled £20 to be sent to the Red Cross and £50 to the Guides B P Memorial Fund, which has now reached over £38,000.

Warkworth (Northumberland) Scouts have raised over £130 for charity by salvage collections, whist drives, and dances.

More than 100 Winnipeg Scouts and Cubs spend every Saturday morning sorting and baling tinfoil for the Children's Hospital.

South Africa Loses a Famous Man

ALL South Africa has been lamenting the death of General Hertzog. He was 76, and, having been born in Cape Colony, all his life was spent in his own country.

He fought against us in the Boer War, and was one of the men who signed the peace with Lord Kitchener. He was irconcilable, and the time came when General Botha had to leave him out of the Cabinet owing to the growing hostility between them.

He was against South Africa entering the last war, and not all that has happened since prevented him holding out against

South Africa entering this. He never really settled down as a citizen of the British Empire, but wanted independence. He came over here, and was especially delighted when we gave him Kruger's old wagon; but he was difficult to get on with, resenting the influence of the British in his country, and he formed a new party. This broke down, and eventually General Hertzog retired from public affairs.

Now he has passed from the scene of his energetic life, South Africa's stormy petrel, and a picturesque figure passes from the South African scene.

CUBS IN THE FENS

A CORRESPONDENT in the Fen country of Cambridgeshire, who drives a Fen pumping station engine, tells us that his pack of cubs has done good work in collecting paper, tins, glass, iron, and bones. This summer alone they have collected eight lorry loads of such salvage, in spite of the fact that they live at Prickwillow, the scattered village with the fens round it like the sea. Altogether, they have collected six tons of paper during the war, making in the first two years

£4 10s each year, and this year £7 10s. Owing to the difficulty of being so scattered the boys do not collect in the winter, but we are delighted to hear that a new company of Guides has been formed, and is carrying on in all weathers.

We believe that one of the steam-engines such as our correspondent drives pumps 150 tons of water a minute into the River Lark. On this river these boys live, so that their leader tells us they are "always on the Lark."

The Stars in Their Courses

It is not without a certain importance that astronomers have just observed a new star.

It appears to have been discovered from several different countries, but we are naturally glad to know that a Welshman, Mr Gordon Ellis, a 24-year-old star-gazer, is probably the first discoverer, with a professor at Bloemfontein as a close second. A third claim is made by a Japanese astronomer at Tokyo.

It is certainly good for us all that we should thus be reminded that we live on a small planet attached to a minor star. We do not know how many inhabited planets may be attached to other

stars, but if such exist let us hope they have worked long ago right through what may be called the machine-gun period to brighter and better days.

The universal study of astronomy, indeed, might well be expected to cure the boldest dictator of the desire to have his own way by means of shooting as many people as possible. In the meantime, we respectfully salute Mr Gordon Ellis and wish he would help us to discover, not merely a new star, but one proudly bearing with it a series of peaceful planets on which wars and evils of all kinds have long since passed away.

THIS KIND WORLD

Who looks after all the animals that suffer in the world? We think we know who looks after more of them than anybody else. It is the PDSA, that admirable institution which the CN remembers when it was a small affair, begun by Mrs. Dickin, but which has now been keeping its silver jubilee.

For 25 years it has been healing and comforting sick animals, and has treated over ten million cases free. During the war its Rescue Squads have saved the lives of nearly a hundred thousand creatures suffering in the raids.

Surely, if there is a VC for kindness, we shall one day have to speak of the PDSA VC?

The Doctors & the Workers

The doctors are seriously warning the nation about the health of its workers.

The millions of workers in our munition factories have earned our gratitude. The Eighth Army has acknowledged the splendid work which provided them with the material to win a great battle. It was no slight task, the pouring out of rifles, field guns, machine-guns, mortars, shells, tanks, aeroplanes, lorries, and all manner of equipment to enable an overwhelming attack to destroy our well-armed enemy. Let us not forget conditions under which these things were made.

In peace it is no simple matter to preserve the health, limbs,

and lives of those engaged in industrial operations. Many of our factories are not as well equipped as they should be, and war heightens the danger to health because of longer hours of work. As a consequence, the doctors state that their consulting-rooms are overcrowded, and that there is an obvious cause. This was stated at the British Medical Association Conference by Dr J. A. Brown, who suggested that the obvious cause of increased illness is industrial fatigue due to excessive working hours.

Dr Brown went on to point out that this was a repetition of what happened in the last war, when production fell so badly that an inquiry was instituted. The report showed conclusively that there is a period beyond which it is not safe to work without causing a decrease in output.

Another authority said that people were suffering from exhaustion, physical and mental, and the conference passed a resolution urging the Ministry of Health to investigate the conditions of labour, hours of work, overtime, and night work.

A LOST ENCYCLOPEDIA FOUND

Three centuries ago a Spaniard wrote an encyclopedia of the wonders of the New World as he surveyed it from the Spanish colonies in California. He saw and interviewed anyone he could, natives, missionaries, explorers, miners; and put it all down. Then, being an old man, he went home to write it up; and part of his tremendous work was printed, and part of it remained in manuscript, for he did not live to see it finished. Then it was lost, and was remembered only by quotations from it.

Lately it has been discovered, hidden among the masses of books and manuscripts in the Vatican; and now it has been republished in full by the Smithsonian Institution, Washington.

A LITTLE FLOCK OF SHEEP

A certain ordnance factory in England which deals with high explosives is situated, for obvious reasons, in open country. It is surrounded by grassland, and it used to be necessary to employ a dozen men in the summer to keep the grass closely cut to obviate the risk of fire.

Last summer other jobs were found for the men, and a flock of sheep kept the grass short. Not only did the sheep save the men's wages, but they provided nearly a ton of wool.

STILL THEY COME, THE VITAMINS

Soon the vitamins will have exhausted the alphabet. They have got down to Vitamin P, which is found in blackberries and the hips of the wild rose, and is said to be very sustaining. Vitamin B1 is said by Professor Pollard of Bristol University to have excellent effect on our good temper and good spirits.

Another writer, Mr E. L. Kenaway, claims that Francis Bacon was the first discoverer of the virtues of Vitamin C, which is found in fresh fruit and vegetables, and is a preventive of scurvy among mariners. He mentions that the sailors in Bacon's romance *The New Atlantis* recovered from illness when they ate a bright red fruit suspiciously like an orange.

AGNES WESTON'S WORK GOES ON

It will come as a shock to those who do not know that both the Royal Sailors Rests founded by Agnes Weston have been destroyed by bombs.

But it will be no surprise to anyone that in the spirit of Agnes Weston they carry on. They are at Portsmouth and Devonport and can give a comfortable bed and meal to 390 seamen. The YWCA has rallied to them and lent them a mobile canteen. In their temporary premises there were served last year more than a quarter of a million meals, and over fifty thousand restful nights were enjoyed in bed.

Agnes Weston was the sailor's friend, one of the first and best they had. Will a few CN readers send the Rests a little encouragement to keep on keeping on?

MANCHESTER'S GREEN BELT

War or no war, it is good to see that the good work goes on of making our cities more pleasant and keeping the countryside unspoiled. An instance of this comes from Cheshire, where the county council has just purchased the lovely 200-acre Brabyns Hall Estate as part of Manchester's Green Belt. The hall and estate are situated in Marple, Cheshire, and have beautiful surroundings commanding glorious views of the Cheshire plain and the Derbyshire hills.

LONDON'S YOUNG FARMERS

London's first Young Farmers Club has been formed in Kentish Town by girls between 16 and 18, who have named it the First London Unit Young Farmers Club. They are to have intensive farm training with a view to being subsequently transferred to the Women's Land Army.

The Parks Committee have given the horticultural section three allotments, and the Zoological Society are allowing the girls to receive practical training at the Zoo's farm section. The People's Dispensary for Sick Animals is to give them veterinary training in local surgeries.

Tremendous keenness is being shown by these young farm cadets, who are organising the club entirely by themselves in groups of six, each with a group leader. Discipline will be maintained by a committee of inquiry. Instructors are to be provided by the local LCC Institute, and the girls are to make an appeal for financial assistance to purchase uniforms for use when they work in the open air.



Good News in the Desert.

Fighting men in the battle area receiving a copy of Crusader, the Eighth Army's own weekly newspaper

A WATCH AND A BIBLE

An inquiry among representative sections of the American armed forces as to what sort of gifts from home they would welcome revealed that the article most in demand was a wrist-watch. Nearly all the sailors and three-quarters of the soldiers wanted to know the time.

Another popular gift was the Bible. More than half the men of both Services who were asked said they would like one, and most of them would rather have the whole Book than just a New Testament.

THE HONOUR BOX

Chester has joined the steadily growing list of towns to have Honour Boxes fixed to the buses to enable passengers to drop in uncollected fares. A score or more of Lancashire towns now have these boxes, and at least a dozen towns have them in Cheshire.

TOM THUMB OF THE NAVY

Probably the tiniest officer in the Royal Navy is Lieutenant Christopher John Easterling, electrical officer on a cable-ship. He stands 4 feet 9 in his socks, and weighs just under seven stones.

When the war began this Tom Thumb of the Navy was serving on a merchant ship, which was sunk in a night attack in the Channel. Only six survivors managed to get away on a raft.

A Breakfast and a Dinner

The breakfast of General Montgomery with General von Thoma has become historic, and a correspondent recalls the occasion on which General Grant had as his guest at dinner the defeated General Lee after the American Civil War.

General Montgomery and von Thoma were very friendly, and before the meal was over were fighting their battles over again on the table-cloth.

All this was singularly like the dinner shared by the victorious Grant and the vanquished Lee. Grant in his workaday clothes, Lee resplendent in a new uniform. Very soon the two fell into conversation on old times, and it was long before the terms of peace were mentioned, though they were the real reason for the meeting.

But the oddest thing about these two stories of rival generals is that in North Africa Montgomery's triumph over von Thoma was partly due to his use of Grant and Lee tanks!

JOHN BOOTH WITH HIS PICK & SHOVEL

All weekly output records for hard-got coal in the Cannock Chase area have been broken by a hewer who mined 52 tons 3 cwt in a week. The miner who has done this is John Booth, and he used only a pick and a shovel.

BRAVE CARDINAL

The Vichy Government in France has bargained away its soul to Germany in its maltreatment of the Jews. But there are shining lights in the darkness. One of them is that Cardinal Gerlier, of Lyons, has refused to give up Jewish children placed under Roman Catholic protection.

THE COTTON MILLS

Lancashire's wartime cotton-trade boom is bringing unsuspected windfalls to holders of mill shares which have for years been looked on as almost worthless. The reason for the boom in cotton appears to be due partly to Government backing now being given to the industry, and partly to the growing faith that the mills will regain much of their old prosperity when the war is over.

BIRDS OF THE BEACH

Now that the beach at Bournemouth is closed to human beings birds have taken it over. The gulls know perfectly well that the beach belongs to them. Formerly sparrows and pigeons used to walk and hop about among the visitors while the gulls kept at a respectful distance until these retired. Now the sparrows and pigeons have vanished, but the rooks try to take possession.

This is actively resented by the gulls, which vigorously chivvy the intruders away as being trespassers on gull-property.

The EDITOR'S TABLE

One of Those Melancholy Men

WE shall be interested to see if the Ministry of Information sends out one of its books on General Montgomery's victory, and, if so, if it engages the writer of its Iceland book to do it.

As C.N. readers know, the MOI book on Iceland (printed, of course, out of the taxes) declares that, though life is perhaps possible without Beer, it is only a melancholy business, the inference being that you *must* have beer to be romantic and do noble things.

In case the MOI should contemplate a book on the man who has smashed Rommel's Army to pieces, and laid the foundations for saving the world, we have the pleasure to inform it that General Montgomery is one of those melancholy teetotallers.

The Deanery Spirit

ALL C.N. readers know that Owen Stanley was a brother of the famous Dean of Westminster.

But how many people know that General Montgomery is the grandson of another famous dean? His mother was the daughter of Dr Farrar, Dean of Canterbury.

Odd that two names so much in the news should come into the history of our two most famous deaneries.

THRILLS

WE 'hope it is somebody's business to keep a record of the cheerful little incidents of the war which may escape the notice of the more serious historians.

If so, we would commend to his attention the story of the British paratroops on their way to Tunisian airfields who passed away the time in their transport planes, before making their spectacular leaps, by singing and reading thrillers!

Under the Editor's Table

ITALY is still Hitler's principal door to the Mediterranean. And is getting the knocks.

PLAN your Christmas dinner now. But don't get fed up with it.

SOMEONE complains that there are thousands of shops without fish. We could find none at our iron-monger's.

SOME singers have better voices than they imagine. Others have better imaginations than voices.

Peter Puck Wants to Know



If Japan has found an unbreakable China

They That Go Down to the Sea

IN a West Country port there is a friendly place where merchant seamen foregather.

Sometimes they have just brought a precious cargo of food across the ocean, and sometimes they come with the smell of the sea heavy about them, cold, wet, clad in clothes scanty enough.

Somewhere out on the deep their ship, in ballast or well-laden, fell a victim to mine, bomb, shell, or torpedo, and they themselves spent several hours on a raft.

The writer has just visited this welcome haven of refreshment, rest, and recreation, and has come away filled with admiration of these brave men who are worthy of the highest traditions of our maritime history.

They say little or nothing of their experiences. The nightmare over, they want to forget. The last thing they want to do is to encourage discussion about it.

Instead, the all-absorbing question surging uppermost in their minds is, "When are we going to get another ship?" Undaunted by the grim hazards they know they must face, these Greathearts are always looking

for ships, eager to put to sea. That is why there has never yet been a ship in port because she could not get a crew. Not all the storms and perils of the sea can quench the sailor's love for it.

This restlessness ashore, this hungry longing, or "sea-fever," as John Masefield calls it, is all the nobler in these days when submarine, plane, and surface raider stalk the merchant vessels on their age-old and lawful errands. We remember the words of our sailor-poet Masefield:

*I must go down to the sea again,
To the lovely sea and the sky.
And all I ask is a tall ship
And a star to steer her by,
And the long swell, and the sea's song
And the wet sail shaking,
And the wind's sting, and the salt spray,
And the grey dawn breaking.*

*I must go down to the sea again,
For the call of the running tide
Is a wild call, and a clear call,
And may not be denied.
And all I ask is a windy day
And the white clouds flying,
And the blown spume, and the wet spray,
And the seagulls crying.*

HOME, SWEET HOME

HOME, SWEET HOME, as most of us know and all of us should know, was written by an American, and it is interesting now to recall that the author, homeless through most of his days, was laid to rest in Tunis, where he had been U.S. Consul.

There it was that his sad life ran out in April 1852, and there the wanderer found a resting-place thousands of miles from New York, where he was born in 1791. For 30 years his body

lay in a foreign land, but in 1883 it was taken back to the United States and given honourable burial in the chapel of Oak Hill Cemetery, Washington.

Strange to think that Americans and Englishmen are marching almost over his resting-place out there; and it may well be that some of them are at this moment singing the immortal words of John Howard Payne to the tune written by our English composer, Sir Henry Bishop.

Opportunity

IN days like these may we not be stirred to greater endeavour by the thrilling tribute paid almost 300 years ago to an earl of whom this was written?

He did the best things in the worst times, and hoped them in the most calamitous.

Peace Like a Rock

LOOKING into the future, Sir Stafford Cripps, who has just become Minister of Aircraft Production, declares that the aeroplane provides an opportunity of controlling world order such as has never before existed. An International Air Force, he says, could reach the most remote corners of the world and strike at any who sought to break the peace for their own advantage.

In the peace of reason we must establish (and not a peace of hot-tempered revenge) we may be able to set up such a controlling force, which Lord Davies and his New Commonwealth Society have been advocating 20 years. Peace, in any case, must be built up on a rock and not on noble hopes and shadowy illusions.

JUST AN IDEA

These are the days when it may be worth while to remember the old saying that the poor man seeks meat for his stomach and the gourmet stomach for his meat.

The Call to Young Cornwall DOWN TO THE TIN MINES

DOWN in the mining areas of Cornwall, in those days when every tin mine was a hive of industry and prosperity, there was no need to ask the miner's son what he intended to be.

The mining instinct of generations was born in him; all the years of his youth he had spent among mining folk. The roar of the stamps at the mines was the familiar sound ever in his ear; the great rambling buildings, the tall chimneys, and the rivers "running red to the sea" were ever before his eyes.

He, like his forefathers, heard the age-old call of the mines, and with schooldays over he

crisis; it has outlasted half a century and more, in spite of the fact that the stamps were silent and the ancient workings abandoned.

Now that tin is needed so badly, and the Cornish mines are gradually recovering their old-time glory, the Lord Lieutenant of the county (Colonel E. H. W. Bolitho) is arousing the instinct that has lain somewhat dormant through the years of depression. He is appealing to the youth of



Canadian soldiers working as miners at the Silver Valley Tin Mine in Cornwall return to the surface

responded with all the excitement and ardour of youth.

Not even the closing of the mines when cheap tin came from other countries could destroy the natural mining instinct of the Cornishman. Thousands of miners went with their families overseas, to delve deep in new lands in the time-honoured quest for the treasures of the earth.

There were Cornishmen at Johannesburg when the golden city was a mining camp. There were Cornishmen in the tin fields of Malaya and the tin mines of Nigeria and Bolivia. There were Cornishmen in the copper mines of America and the silver mines of Mexico. Many went to the Gold Coast and Kimberley to work in the gold and diamond mines. Indeed, so strong was the instinct that it was said that wherever a hole was sunk on the face of the earth a Cornishman would be found at the bottom of it. At home the instinct survived the

Cornwall, especially the sons of miners, to follow in the footsteps of their fathers and go down the old mines again.

"We all know the nation wants tin, and the nation wants Cornish tin," says he. "We have the tin and must produce it. It is our boys and young men who can come forward and greatly increase the output of our mines."

Everything is being done to encourage the revival of England's oldest industry. The Ministry of Labour has intimated that young men who volunteer to work in the mines will not be called up for military service, and boys are to receive free training at Camborne School of Mines.

For long years the derelict, half-forgotten waste places of Cornwall have held their secret store of wealth. They have waited for the time when they would again become a credit to the country. At last that time has come.

MUSSOLINI'S DOZEN Twelve Islands and What They Mean

WE are likely to find the Dodecanese coming very much in the news, coupled with Rhodes, Mitylene, and Samos. The Dodecanese are twelve small islands which form a kind of covering screen where the coast of Asia Minor, the Turkish mainland, turns northward from the east. The word actually means Twelve Islands, and the whole dozen were occupied by Italy in 1912 during her war with Turkey.

Now the German radio tells us that British Forces, heavily massed at Cyprus, 160 miles east of Rhodes, are preparing to attack the Dodecanese.

It may well be so, for on the map we find this island screen directly opposite the similar screen of the Cyclades, off the Greek coast and by no means far away, a mere hop for a bomber or a fighter plane. Thus Rhodes and the Twelve Islands may become our bases in the immediate future either for the rescue of Greece or for the defence of Turkey.

The Colossus of Rhodes

All these islands are Greek by history and culture, and with the goodwill of Turkey they must go back again to Greece. We say "culture" with special emphasis and good reason, for though some of us may have difficulty in associating the Dodecanese with great events of the past, these little islands have been cradles of mighty benefits for humanity.

Rhodes is, of course, not a small island at all. Indeed, the chief thing we remember about this place is the famous Colossus of Rhodes, from which we get our word colossal.

Rhodes, though as big as Cheshire, is hardly colossal in size by any standards, but the word comes from the imposing statue of the sun-god of the island which stood 100 feet high near the harbour. Rhodes had her own great empire in the 5th century B.C. and travellers brought home countless tales of her magnificence. That is how the Colossus of Rhodes came down in history as one of the Seven Wonders of the World.

And, unlike the rest of Ancient Greece, Rhodes maintained her greatness right up to modern times. She was conquered by the Persians, by Alexander, by the Romans; by Venice, Genoa, and Byzantium, the mighty Greek metropolis which later became Turkish Constantinople. Then the Knights Hospitallers of St John took the island in 1309, after a doughty three-years siege, and made it their stronghold

until they in turn had to capitulate to the Turks in 1523, after a splendid defence.

Rhodes in ancient times was a centre of art as well as trade. Its sculpture, architecture, and painting were magnificent, and its poets, orators, and athletes were famous. It had a great population, with many fine cities, but under the Turks it dwindled down to poverty and insignificance. To do them justice, the Italians brought many benefits to the island, and long before Mussolini's day had begun to raise it again to prosperity.

Today it is a strategic centre of great importance, on a par with Cyprus, its neighbour. But even so, the total population of Rhodes, Egea, and the Dodecanese, which together comprise the Aegean Dependencies of Italy, is not more than 100,000, perhaps only a fifth of the population of ancient Rhodes alone.

The Dodecanese islands are Astypalaea, Karpethos, Casos, Tilos, Nisyros, Kalymnos, Leros, Patmos, Cos, Symi, Karchi, and Lipsi. It was on rocky Patmos that the Apostle John saw the visions of the Book of Revelation. Cos, the size of our Isle of Wight, was the birthplace of Hippocrates, Father of Medicine, and of the artist Apelles, an outstanding painter of Ancient Greece. Its wine, its pottery, and its textiles were exported all over the world.

The Isles of Greece

These islands must return to their Greek motherland, together with the equally famous Cyclades, with Samos and lovely Mitylene, the rose-scented Lesbos where Sappho, the world's greatest woman poet, was born and lived her life. All these islands now defiled by the jackboots of Mussolini's and Hitler's legions must once again become, in the immortal words of Byron, the lover of undying Greece:

*The isles of Greece, the isles of Greece,
Where burning Sappho loved and sung.*

— May that day dawn sooner than we even now expect.

The Bank Clerk & His Awkward Customer

BANK clerks are supposed to have uneventful lives, but their work is not as dull as it seems, and even its ordinary routine calls for swift thinking and cool action.

No wonder that in this war, as in the last, the men of our banks are making their mark on the field of battle.

An exceptional number of the younger men have chosen the Navy, as offering the best adventure in the three Services. But it was in the Army that a most typical and characteristic stroke of leadership has just been fittingly rewarded by the D.C.M.

It was Sergeant Norman Griffiths, of the Rifle Brigade, a regiment much favoured by bank

clerks, who won his D.C.M. for the feat in question. A formation of more than 20 German tanks attacked his platoon in the Western Desert on August 31. The sergeant, as little flurried in the Egyptian sands as he would have been at his home in Muswell Hill, held his fire until the armoured monsters were within close range. Then he let fly, knocking out five of the tanks and damaging others.

His cool bravery kept the panzers back until our own tanks arrived on the scene. One can imagine him saying to himself, "Now here's an awkward customer; how shall we deal with him?" He certainly solved the problem.

CARRY ON

What Shall We Say to These Things?

WHAT shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

From Paul's Letters to the Romans

THE FIXED MAN IN A MOVING WORLD

WHAT can be expected of a man who has spent most of his life making heads for pins. It is in vain that new laws and new manners have been at pains to level all barriers to such a man and to open to him on every side a thousand different paths to fortune. In the midst of universal movement he has been rendered stationary.

De Tocqueville

Ben Jonson Invites a Friend to His Poor House

TONIGHT, grave sir, both my poor house and I
Do equally desire your company:
Not that we think us worthy
such a guest,
But that your worth will dignify
our feast.

With those that come, whose grace may make that seem
Something which else would
hope for no esteem.
It is the fair acceptance, sir,
creates

The entertainment perfect, not
the cates.

Yet shall you have, to rectify
your palate,
An olive, capers, or some better
sallet

Ushering the mutton: with a
short-legged hen,

If we can get her full of eggs,
and then,

Limons, and wine for sauce: to
these a coney

Is not to be despaired of for our
money;

Nor shall our cups make any
guilty men,

But at our parting will be as
when

We innocently met. No simple
word

That shall be uttered at our
mirthful board

Shall make us sad next morning,
or affright

The liberty that we'll enjoy
tonight.

The Prey of the Profiteer

THERE is hardly anything in the world that some man cannot make a little worse and sell a little cheaper, and the people who consider price only are that man's lawful prey.

John Ruskin

Old Tubal Cain

OLD Tubal Cain was a man of might
The spear and the sword for men whose joy
In the days when earth was young
Is to slay their fellow man."

By the fierce red light of his furnace bright
The strokes of his hammer rung;

And he lifted high his brawny hand
On the iron glowing clear,

Till the sparks rushed out in scarlet showers,
As he fashioned the sword and spear.

And he sang: "Hurrah for my handiwork!
Hurrah for the spear and sword!

Hurrah for the hand that shall wield them well,
For he shall be king and lord."

To Tubal Cain came many a one,
As he wrought by his roaring fire,

And each one prayed for a strong steel blade
As the crown of his desire:

And he made them weapons sharp and strong,
Till they shouted loud for glee,

And gave him gifts of pearl and gold,
And spoils of the forest free.

And they sang: "Hurrah for Tubal Cain
Who hath given us strength anew!

Hurrah for the smith, hurrah for the fire,
And hurrah for the metal true!"

BUT a sudden change came o'er his heart
Ere the setting of the sun,

And Tubal Cain was filled with pain
For the evil he had done;

He saw that men, with rage and hate,
Made war upon their kind,

That the land was red with blood they shed
In their lust for carnage, blind.

And he said: "Alas! that ever I made,
Or that skill of mine should plan,

AND for many a day old Tubal Cain
Sat brooding o'er his woe;

And his hand forebore to smite the ore
And his furnace smouldered low.

But he rose at last with a cheerful face,
And a bright courageous eye,

And bared his strong right arm for work,
While the quick flames mounted high.

And he sang: "Hurrah for my handicraft!"
And the red sparks lit the air;

"Not alone for the blade was the bright steel made";
And he fashioned the first ploughshare.

AND men, taught wisdom from the past,
In friendship joined their hands,

Hung the sword in the hall, the spear on the wall,
And ploughed the willing lands;

And sang: "Hurrah for Tubal Cain!
Our staunch good friend is he;

And for the ploughshare and the plough
To him our praise shall be.

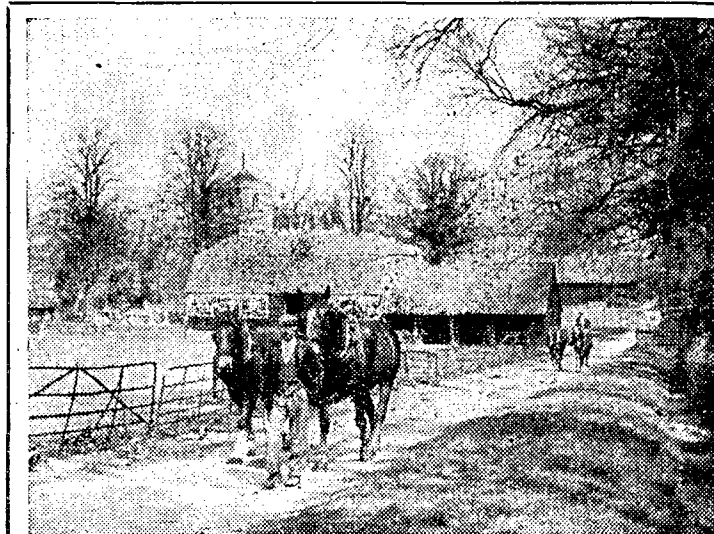
But while Oppression lifts its head,
Or a tyrant would be lord,

Though we may thank him for the Plough,
We'll not forget the Sword!"

Charles Mackay

Those Who Have Gone Before
GRANT, O Lord, that keeping in glad remembrance those who have gone before, who have stood by us and helped us, who have cheered us by their sympathy and strengthened us by their example, we may seize every opportunity of life, and rejoice in the promise of a glorious resurrection with them, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen



THIS ENGLAND

The farm by the church at Shalford in Essex.

TOPSY-TURVY EMERALD ISLE

ONE of the strangest twists of this strange war is the way our neutral friends in Eire pretend that it is no concern of theirs. So queer a thing is politics!

There are at least 150,000 Eire citizens in the British forces and their record is a proud one.

The remaining Irish regiments of the British Army are still recruited heavily from the De Valera side of the Ulster border; and this has been so ever since the Free State was born twenty years ago.

A steady stream of young men crosses almost daily into Ulster to join our ranks of freedom. Some do it because there is no work for them in their own country; others are attracted by the adventure, for that is in the Irishman's blood. He loves a fight, and a bonny fighter he makes.

A classic story tells of an Irishman who, seeing a crowd gathered to watch a street brawl, asked "Is this a private fight, or can anyone join in?"

The Eire authorities are powerless to stop the flow of recruits into Northern Ireland.

What they can do is to forbid their newspapers to mention the names of Irishmen who have brought new glory to British

arms. Even when "Paddy" Finucane, that grand fighter-pilot, was at the height of his fame, he was never mentioned in the Irish papers, in case the German Consul in Dublin objected! So free is the Irish Republic, after all its struggling.

But the attitude of some Irishmen to us is still as complete a puzzle as it always has been. A pre-war story illustrates this quite admirably.

An English visitor on holiday was staying at a pleasant country hotel in Eire, and was served by a genial, talkative, and witty old waiter. He remarked how quiet the hotel was, and asked if it had always been so. "Arrah, no, yer honour," said the waiter sadly. "Things was very different when the English ginthry used to stay in this place."

"But you drove the English gentry out, didn't you?" asked the visitor, and then the waiter's smile faded, and his pleasant, soft voice took on an angry tone.

"Phwat roight had they to go?" he demanded. "Will yez tell me *that*, sorr?"

Soldiers on Peace Work

FROM Australia comes an account of the work done by Italian prisoners of war at an Australian internment camp.

They work an eight-hour day for six days a week, and receive 1s 3d a day for skilled work and 7d a day for unskilled work—this, of course, in addition to food. These rates of daily pay are in accordance with international law. Working on these terms, the prisoners at a single camp are reported to have irrigated 1090 acres between July 1 and

October 16, in which time they raised 193,000 lbs of vegetables and 36 tons of green fodder.

An irrigation canal just completed will enable an additional 450 acres to be cultivated. They have built nearly 50 miles of canal, a model dairy, a sewage plant, recreation halls, tennis courts, and a church, building with bush timber they have cut themselves. It is said that the prisoners have gained an average of nearly a stone in weight since reaching Australia.

New Kind of School

Boys and girls all over Britain will be interested in a new experiment which has been put into operation in Sussex. It is something new in education.

Schoolgirls are being taught engineering. Some of the 15-year-olds are learning to strip and assemble a lorry engine, so that they may earn their living as engineers and mechanics. Other younger girls, and boys too, are learning the crafts of the blacksmith, the carpenter, and the bricklayer while at school.

Nursing is taught to most Sussex schoolgirls as a regular subject. Others just leaving school are training for the National Fire Service, the Civil Defence, and as ATS to the Home Guard.

Boys and girls are learning Land Army work while still at school. They are being trained so that they can step right into the war effort if the war is still on when they are ready, or make a place for themselves in post-war industry if peace has come.

In Windsor there is another very interesting school, where a small group of boys and girls are now being trained for the personal service of Princess Elizabeth.

The heiress to the Throne comes of age at 18, in two years from now, and will then have her own Household.

THE EASIEST COAL TO GET

The first coal got in our country was naturally that at or near the surface, the easiest to get. Most of it has long ago been worked out, but still there are outcrops which help us in time of emergency such as this, when the pits are not giving us all that we require.

It is said that 60,000 tons of coal a week are now being got from various outcrops in Yorkshire, Derbyshire, and the Midlands, and many other fields are being prospected. The nature of the work varies greatly; sometimes the coal is too greatly burdened with surface material covering it. Not rarely there are difficulties with water, reminding us that the first steam-engine was designed to pump water out of mines. When all the difficulties are allowed for, outcrop coal offers the nation valuable assistance at this moment.

Help For Abyssinia

Forty members of the Friends Ambulance Unit have gone to Abyssinia to do much-needed medical work there.

One party, which travelled in August from Berbera to Dire Dawa by lorry and then by train to Addis Ababa, received frequent gifts of hard-boiled eggs and bananas from Ethiopians. They have now joined the staff of the Haile Selassie Hospital in the capital, where there are so many patients requiring treatment that often two have to share one bed.

The second party evidently practised on the voyage, for the leader reports that when their ship reached Aden he was summoned to the captain's cabin and, in the presence of all the ship's officers, presented with a cheque for £21 in appreciation of the party's medical work.

BAD TOYS FOR CHRISTMAS

WITH the approach of Christmas, grown-ups as well as boys and girls are much concerned about the high price and the low quality of the toys in our shops.

The most ridiculous prices are being asked, and paid, for toys of the poorest and crudest quality. People are buying them because there is little else to buy. Shopkeepers, to their credit, are often telling their customers that such articles are not really worth the money, though we have seen seven-and-sixpenny golliwogs sold in Piccadilly for over 30 shillings.

A remarkable thing is that many boys, and perhaps some girls, are making these toys and selling them quite easily to the shops. Wooden toys are made from odd pieces of timber picked up from dumps. Dolls are made of rags, and a doll with the familiar squeak or a pair of life-like eyes is more than a rarity. Such articles just cannot be made now.

Lowering the Standard

No wonder that a boy who should have been in a war factory, when brought up, recently in a Children's Court for some offence, explained that he could earn much more money by making bad toys than by helping to make good munitions.

Such a state of affairs is, of course, thoroughly bad. We know we cannot expect to have toys in pre-war quantities and of pre-war quality, yet it is a serious thing to have the standard of British toys lowered in times like these, when trifles are important.

For consider the facts. Before the last war this country imported immense quantities of toys (most of her cheap toys, in fact) from Germany and Japan. In both those countries a huge toy industry was largely a home industry. That is to say, the workers worked at home, in villages as well as towns, round great centres like Nuremberg and Osaka, where the big toy factories are now making weapons for death and destruction.

Child Workers

Children formed a big proportion of the toy-workers of Japan and Germany. Young German boys and girls, and in Japan mere infants, worked long hours for a few pence a day. Even if they could carry out only the simplest processes they helped materially in the industry by dint of sheer numbers. And, of course, they kept wages down. That was why the Germans and the Japanese were able to flood the markets of the world with cheap toys which defied competition in the matter of price.

It is true that in quality we kept our supremacy, with toys as with all other British products. Then, as now, British model ships and railway engines, British toy soldiers, and other British-made toys were the best in the world, and that part of the world which likes the best and can afford to pay for it, such as the wealthy section of the market in North and South America, bought British. But even here our toy manufacturers were all too often inclined to give their customers what they themselves were sure was good for them, rather than what they wanted. The quality was British; but, as in other British industries of the time, cotton goods for example, the style was also British, when it should have been the style of the customer's country.

At the end of the last war, largely as the result of anti-German feeling, the leaders of our toy trade woke from their sleep and decided to make cheap toys for their fellow-countrymen, as well as expensive ones. They brushed up their ideas and re-captured the home market, finding to their surprise that they were capturing foreign markets too. By sheer intelligence and hard work our toy-makers put the British product right at the top of the Christmas tree, and there it remained until this war.

Japan had, of course, made heavy inroads into the cheap-toy market between the wars, as she did with all kinds of other goods made under conditions we should never tolerate. "Made in Japan" soon replaced "Made in Germany" as the trade-mark of the cheap and nasty.

Unskilled Amateurs

What is serious is that at this moment our toyshops are being packed with toys as crude and cheap and nasty as anything the sweat-shops of Osaka and Nagoya ever turned out. It is not the highly-skilled and much-respected craftsmen of the British toy trade who are making them, but unskilled amateurs who should be doing more useful work. Discredit is being brought on the toy trade, and on British repute for quality and workmanship, by these bad toys, and something should be done to prevent the harm they are doing.

Toys are important things. Boys and girls in this country, where we do not have to swallow the poison of a perverted education for tyranny and aggression, do not need telling that the influence of toys is immense. Is there one of us who has not lavished on some favourite toy streams of affection and creative imagination?

Good toys help to make good boys and girls; and good boys and girls make everything worth having.

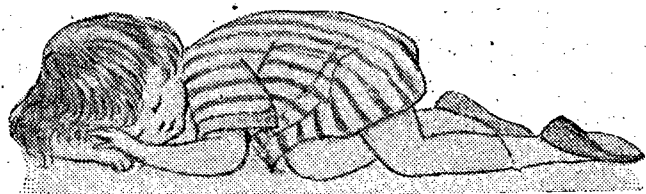
EMPIRE ATC

It was only to be expected that the fame of the Air Training Corps would spread far beyond these islands.

We are told that similar organisations are now firmly established in several Dominions, and many thousands of young Australians, Canadians, New Zealanders, West Indians, and Rhodesians are hard at work training to enter their own air forces or the R.A.F. In Australia 65 squadrons with 8000 cadets were enrolled in less than a year. In Southern Rhodesia nearly 200 cadets spent a week in camp last August. The movement has spread to the United States, also, and the first unit of air cadets has just been formed at the New York Military Academy.

Of more than 100,000 British ATC cadets who visited RAF training camps this summer, 62,000 flew in Service aircraft.

BEDTIME CORNER



THE FARMER AND THE DWARF

A FARMER whose land included a little hill decided that this should not be idle, and began to plough it up. Immediately a dwarf who lived in the hill came out and angrily asked how the farmer dared plough on the roof of his mansion, disturbing his rest.

The farmer told him that crops were needed to feed the people, and said the hill must grow something, but it took the farmer a long time to persuade the little man to listen. So at last they came to terms. The first year the farmer was to have what grew above the ground, while the dwarf had all below; and the second year the farmer should have what was below and the dwarf what was above.

The dwarf was quite willing to fall in with this arrangement, so then the farmer, who

was a clever and cunning man, planted corn for the first year, and when harvest time came, left the roots for the dwarf, while he took the grain. In the second year he planted carrots, and left the tops for the dwarf, while he took the roots.

Spare a Penny

CHRISTMAS is coming, the geese are getting fat, Please to put a penny in an old man's hat; If you haven't got a penny a halfpenny will do, If you haven't got a halfpenny, God bless you.

PRAYER

Keep me safe, O Lord, this night, and watch over our home and our land. Bless all the friends about me and help me to live so that I do not trouble them. Make me now and always helpful in our home and useful to our country. Amen

What Has Happened to the Shell?

By A SCIENTIFIC CORRESPONDENT

THERE are few hobbies more easily followed in normal times than the collecting of seashells; but these are not normal times, and most of our beaches are in prohibited areas. There are, however, still some of our broad estuaries open to the collector which can provide beautiful specimens.

The astonishing beauty of form exhibited by molluscan shells is a never-ceasing source of wonder and pleasure to many people, and when it is realised that these beautiful shapes are in a miraculous way produced by the soft, oozy creatures inside, who have the power of beautifying their dwelling-places with bands of colour and other decorative effects, pleasure and wonder are replaced by amazement. Take the shell of the common whelk for example, one of the commonest molluscs of our coast.

The soaring "turret" of the whelk's shell, its ribbed surface, and its broad expanded base are things of beauty which leave us amazed as to how the very unartistic-looking creature can produce them.

Shells are the strong houses which the molluscs build for themselves, and it could be wished that human beings were equally successful in making homes as beautiful and efficient.

In what is called the Red Crag of East Anglia, the deposit of a very ancient sea which flowed over what are now the counties of Norfolk, Suffolk, and Essex, are

masses of the seashells of remote times. Also many of the molluscs in the Red Crag are still flourishing in the sea, and among these is the whelk. If the turret of its shell is examined it is seen that in some 95 per cent of them the twist of the turret is right-handed, while the remaining five per cent are left-handed. This is strange, but the mystery grows when a number of the ancient whelk shells from the Red Crag are examined, for in them we notice that some 95 per cent show turrets with a left-handed twist, the rest being right-handed.

What does this signify? Alas, we have no answer to give, and it is doubtful if we ever shall be able to provide one. It seems impossible to believe that the manner in which the turrets of the whelk shells are twisted could have any beneficial or other effect upon the creatures living inside them, so the argument that the twist of the turret had a "survival value" does not help us. Yet it appears to be a fact that the twist of the whelk's shell has changed from left to right, and all we can do is to wonder, and pass on.

A HOME IN BETHANY

SYDNEY and Joyce Loch, of whose work for Polish refugees the CN has spoken before, have sent home letters about a new piece of work they have started in Bethany.

Some Polish children became separated from their parents in the early days of escape from Poland. They journeyed into Russia, and were sent on to camps in Iran, and some have now reached Palestine. For a hundred of them who have lately arrived from Russia the Lochs have taken over a school formerly belonging to Russian nuns at Bethany.

When the girls first arrived they were too weak to work. Then they were allowed to do a little sewing, and other lessons are to be introduced gradually. The atmosphere at Bethany seems just what is wanted; so quiet and peaceful that they can perhaps forget the war.

One afternoon these Polish children, mostly under 12, were taken to Gethsemane. After Vespers, so we read in the letter from the Lochs, a tiny girl opened the gate and the iron railing round the stone where Christ knelt to pray that a cup of bitterness might pass from Him. They all crept in, and, kneeling together, prayed for their people and their country.

The excursion ended more lightly, for at tea-time in the monastery garden they were given dolls in Polish clothes, made for them by women in Tel Aviv. After tea they danced and sang Polish folk songs, and the choir of the Orthodox Church sang for them.

In the school garden at Bethany the Lochs found a shrine covering a stone inscribed in Greek. The inscription says that on that very spot Jesus met Martha, saying to her, "I am the Resurrection and the Life." The Lochs suggest that the stone may have been placed there by St Helena, the mother of Constantine, when she visited the Holy Land and marked the holy places. Perhaps the tradition may become a reality in the lives of these Polish girls who have already passed through so much suffering; perhaps at Bethany they too may find new life and hope for the future.

Children's Hour

Here are details of the BBC broadcasts from Wednesday, December 2 to Tuesday, December 8.

WEDNESDAY, 5.20 The Seven Simeons, a story adapted by Barbara Sleigh from a Russian fairytale. 5.55 Prayers.

THURSDAY, 5.20 Fourth episode of Spanish Galleon, the serial play by Tudur Watkins.

FRIDAY, 5.20 Olive Shapley's American News Letter; followed by gramophone records. 5.45 Wild Animals and Their Training, a talk by Marcus La Touche.

SATURDAY, 5.20 Songs by Cherry Lind; followed by Nan Kenway and Douglas Young in It Goes To Show. 5.45 Sports talk by F. N. S. Creek.

SUNDAY, 5.20 Men Who Made the Bible, by Stephen Potter.

MONDAY, 5.20 Composers and Children, a recital by Mary Lake and Michael Mullinar of music by great composers which was inspired by children. 5.35 Mac's Christmas appeal for the Red Cross Prisoners of War Fund. 5.45 The Zoo Man.

TUESDAY, 5.30 Mary, Queen of Scots. 5.50 A talk on the Jewish Festival of Hanukkah by the Chief Rabbi.

The Book Week

THE idea of the National Book Council's Children's Book Week has captured the imagination of teachers, librarians, and children alike. The successful experiment at Malden was followed first by a Book Week at Wallington, then at Gillingham, Sutton, and Watford, and then at Finchley.

Wearing the uniform of the US Forces, Lieutenant Brownlee opened the Finchley Book Week Talks with a most interesting and informative chat on the United States, at the close of which he was peppered with questions from his young audience.

Miss Margaret Tempest, illustrator of the famous Grey Rabbit books, delighted an audience of schoolchildren with lightning charcoal sketches of characters in the Alison Uttley books, and gave them useful hints on how to set about writing books themselves. In a talk on Pictures and Books, Mrs Cora Gordon told the children some absorbing stories about people of other countries.

An original feature was entitled Your Own Brains Trust. Conducted by Mr Corp of the National Book Council, and Miss Brown, the district librarian, it demonstrated the value of books for answering questions. The children were invited to select questions from a list compiled for the purpose, and the two members of the "brains trust" supplied the answers from reference books.

Miss E. M. Humphreys' Puppet Show was another popular feature, especially with the younger children. The little plays included Tweedledum and Tweedledee, Humpty Dumpty

(whose hard-boiled inside was revealed when he had a great fall), King John and the Abbot of Canterbury, and a topical little sketch featuring Mussolini and Hitler! Miss Humphreys explained that she had learned all about puppets from books, and advised those interested in that hobby to follow her example.

The well-known broadcaster Mr Stephen Jack delighted the children with three-quarters of an hour of poetry reading, beginning with nursery rhymes and passing on to the works of modern poets.

The final talk of the series was given by Mr H. M. Wilson, the well-known bookseller, who brought with him an excellent selection of books from his stock. He spoke to the children about Books and the Bookshop, and advised them to read all they could. "Read books now for the enjoyment you get from them; then when you're older and need to read for your careers you'll find it less of an effort. You cannot all be prime ministers, but you can be somebody—if you read."

It is estimated that 2000 schoolchildren attended these talks. The demand for further Children's Book Weeks is such that the NBC has planned several more, one taking place this week at Kendal.

WONDERS COMING INTO BEING

DR CHARLES M. A. STINE, an American chemist, says that new processes which normally might have taken half a century to bring to fruition have been realised, through the pressure of the war, within a few months.

New fuels and new plastics may reduce the weight of cars by half, while at the same time yielding to them 50 miles to the gallon. Plastics and composition boards are coming into their own in house construction. We have glass that is unbreakable, glass that will float, and wood that

will not burn. Hosiery made from air, water, and coal is followed by shoes containing no leather, there are window screens without any wire, and machinery bearings without any metal.

Large-scale synthesis of ammonia means a supply of fertilisers which will revolutionise agriculture.

Dr Stine leaves us rather breathless, because we know the difficulty which the producing world has in adjusting labour quickly to upsetting conditions on any great scale.



Mother! Give Constipated Child 'California Syrup of Figs'

Children love the pleasant taste of 'California Syrup of Figs' brand laxative, and gladly take it, even when bilious, feverish, sick or constipated. No other laxative regulates the tender little bowels so nicely. It sweetens the stomach and stimulates the liver and bowels without cramp-

ing or over-acting. Millions of mothers depend upon this gentle, harmless laxative.

Tell your chemist you want 'California Syrup of Figs,' which has full directions for babies and children of all ages. Mother, you must say 'CALIFORNIA.'

SALUTE TO BRAVE BRITONS



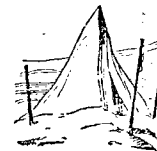
No. 2 Captain Scott

The Polar Explorer of undying fame



In June 1910, Captain Scott set sail from England in the 'Terra Nova' accompanied by a small band of explorers, with the avowed intention of being the first men to reach the South Pole. You're probably familiar with the epic story of their bravery, the long marches through the biting blizzards, the calm courage with which they faced incredible hardships.

Did you know that Captain Scott and his party were sustained by steaming cups of Fry's Cocoa and by munching Fry's Chocolate? Captain Scott wrote: 'Crunching those elaborate chocolates brought one nearer to civilization than anything we experienced sledging.'



Presented by **FRY'S** whose famous CHOCOLATE AND COCOA have sustained many brave men in their hazardous quests

The BRAN TUB

EXTRA

CRIED an angry diner: "Waiter, I've just found a safety-pin in my soup!"

"Well, keep it quiet, sir, please," implored the waiter. "There are several people here who have been regular customers for years, and they have never had anything extra thrown in."

Other Worlds

IN the evening the planets Jupiter, Saturn, and Uranus are in the south-east. In the morning Jupiter and Saturn are in the south-west. The picture shows the Moon as it may be seen at 8 o'clock on Saturday morning, December 5.



Difference

TWO philosophers on a country walk fell into a dispute as to the difference between a weasel and a stoat. One said they were weaselly distinguished, while the other maintained that it was stoatally different. But they could not agree which was which.

Ninny

AMONG the simple creatures You will surely call to mind The dog who tried to run and leave His shadow far behind.

PROBLEM

SAID the teacher during arithmetic lesson: "Now, Tommy, supposing your father gave you fourpence, your mother gave you twopence, and your uncle gave you threepence, what would you have?"

Tommy remained silent for awhile.

"Come, now; that's quite a simple little problem," exclaimed the teacher.

"I don't think it is, miss," replied Tommy. "I can't make up my mind whether I'd have sweets or go to the pictures."

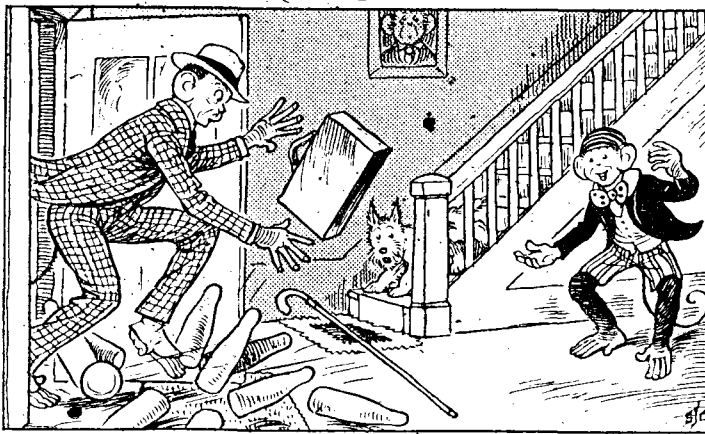
CORRECTION

WHEN Johnny is naughty and trying

His Dad brings a cane and says, sighing,

"Though this I must do, It hurts me more than you"— But it's Johnny who does all the crying.

Jacko Plays Skittles



JACKO was having a game of skittles in the hall one wet day. A particularly good shot sent the whole row flying all over the place. At that very moment the door opened and in stepped Big Brother Adolphus, caught his foot on the rolling ball—and fell headlong! Jacko didn't half catch it.

LACKING

"SOANSO is one of those fellows who has more money than brains, is he not?" asked Brown of his friend Black.

"Yes; and he is not rich either," replied Black.

Better

SOMEONE wrote of the perils of starvation, and said: "But we can save ourselves if we will." The typist, however, knew better. She made it run, "We can save ourselves if we fill."

Do You Live at Guildford?

THIS name means the ford with the gilde, or toll, and no doubt before the town grew up there was a ford across the river, for crossing which a small charge was made by the lord of the manor.

Proverbs About Poverty

A LIGHT purse makes a heavy heart.

He that is content with his poverty is wonderfully rich. Little wealth, little care.

Neither great poverty nor great riches will hear reason.

Poverty is no crime and no credit. Poverty is the mother of all arts.

DIAMONDS

A MILLION little diamonds
Twinkled on the trees;
And all the little maidens said,
"A jewel, if you please!"
But while they held their hands
outstretched
To catch the diamonds gay,
A million little sunbeams came
And stole them all away.

Ici on Parle Français

Jock et le Chat de Perse

Un lecteur nous raconte comment son chien découvrit un allié utile.

Mon terrier irlandais, Jock, que j'ai élevé depuis sa naissance, détestait les chats, de sorte que notre maison était envahie par les souris. Une nuit, je ne pouvais dormir à cause des souris qui grignotaient la plinthe près de mon lit; aussi je sortis chercher Jock et lui ordonnai de s'étendre là pour faire taire les souris.

Le lendemain matin je le laissai sortir à cinq heures et demie, et, lorsque j'ouvris la porte vers sept heures, il était là accompagné d'un superbe petit chat de Perse. Il refusa d'entrer sans le chat.

Le chat est resté avec nous, les souris ont disparu, et chien et chat mangent à la même écuelle.

LAST WEEK'S ANSWERS

Playground Problem

They will meet in an hour, by which time Tom will have gone round five times, Harry four times, Jim three times, and Bob twice.

B	A	N	D	A	C	R	E
A	C	O	R	N	R	A	I
S	T	R	I	A	A	I	T
E	F	R	O	W	N	S	
P	A	T	R	O	L	S	
D	O	R	S	A	L	H	
A	W	E	T	T	I	L	E
D	E	N	I	T	H	E	R
O	R	I	A	L	E	Y	A

THE FIGHT WITH NATURAL POVERTY

Boy. I should be so glad if you would talk to me again about the conditions of our life in Britain. I find it difficult to grasp how so many people can contrive to live comfortably on so small a bit of land. When I look in the shops I wonder where all the stuff comes from, and how much of it comes from abroad.

The Boy Talks With the Man

Man. A very useful exercise, and if the shop windows are not as full as they used to be before the war, you see enough in them to remind you how dependent we are upon seaborne supplies.

Do you realise that only recently in our history we had to live entirely without things that are now common. Here we are in 1942; how much iron do you think we produced in 1742? The answer is 18,000 tons! At that time not only our own country but all other countries produced almost negligible quantities. It was splendid iron, but there was very little of it. As for the rarer metals which we now alloy with steel to give special qualities to iron, science had not yet discovered them. If we contrast those conditions with ours, we realise that 200 years ago we lived in natural poverty, for metals, the foundation of modern work, could only be produced in very small quantities. Compare this natural going without in our small island 200 years ago with the trade we were doing just before this war broke out, and we find that in 1937 we actually imported from abroad £1027,824,000 worth of food, raw materials, and manufactured articles. Bear in mind that that sum stands for the gain of world commodities which we made in a year by our external trade operations.

Boy. How was that mighty cargo made up?

Man. I will give you the chief heads in millions of pounds: Ordinary foods 300; tea, cocoa, wine, and other beverages 50; raw materials 315; articles mainly manufactured 282. You will see that even if we ceased to import ordinary foods we should have to go without 50 million pounds worth of beverages, to say nothing of such valuable foods as rice, maize, and many fruits.

Boy. What are the raw materials imported?

Man. The chief articles are: ores 22 millions; timber 72;

cotton, wool, silk, and other textile materials, over 100; seeds and nuts for oil 35; hides and skins 25; paper materials 16; rubber 12 millions.

Boy. What enormous figures. It seems incredible that so much material could be consumed in a year in our factories.

Man. But the story of a single year's imported materials does not end there, for a large part of the manufactured articles brought in were the raw materials of higher forms of manufacture. That is true of some £70,000,000 worth of metals. Then there was special machinery, of which we brought in £24,000,000, and fuel oil for £46,000,000. Thus the greater part of our imports consists of the very basis of work. The warehouses and shops of our little island are in peace stocked with articles constructed of materials earned by work done for all the world.

Boy. Why should all this material come here?

Man. Because Britain is a splendid natural workshop. Nature has made us that by storing coal for our furnaces, and coal, you should always remember, is a magnet for raw materials, because as a rule it is easier to take materials to coal than to take coal to materials. You will understand that from a striking illustration in our own country. We have splendid china clay in Cornwall, but we find it railed to Staffordshire, where there is coal.

And don't forget that apart from coal we have to bring ability and education to bear upon the coal we mine and the materials we have to bring in from abroad. There are other great coal nations, and there is the new factor of "white coal," as water-power is sometimes called, to produce electricity, a factor we do not possess, and mineral oil, of which we have so little. We shall have gradually to reform our methods if we are to retain the power to gain a thousand million pounds' worth or more of imports every year, and so continue to challenge poverty in what is in many respects a naturally poor country.

PIMPLES? ERUPTIONS?

Little insides need the safe, GENTLE Laxative—Complaxa.



Pimples and blemishes are quick to show on children's delicate skins. These are signs that blood is out of order, and that little insides need a thorough cleansing and sweetening. But never—no, never—give the children harsh purgatives. Give Complaxa—the Complete laxative—which is so soothingly gentle but most efficient. All children like Complaxa. Of pleasant orange flavour.

Price 1/5 including purchase tax from Boots, Timothy Whites, Taylors and all chemists. Sole Distributors: Scott & Bowne Ltd., Wexham Springs, Stoke Poges, Slough, Bucks.

Complaxa REGD TRADE MARK
THE Complete LAXATIVE
* Eat as a Sweet *

3 Million Mothers use it—

BECAUSE it Ends Colds Quicker...

You simply rub 'Vick' on. Its poultice-and-vapour action clears nose, soothes throat, eases chest, relieves cough—**ALL at one time!**

"FOUNTAIN PEN" ACTION

The Gillott Nib with the new "Inkeduct Reservoir" attachment (Pat. No. 477466) gives fountain pen action with advantages of Gillott Stainless Steel Nib. "Inkeduct" opens for easy cleaning. Supplied with four patterns of nib.



THE INKEDUCT HOLDS THE INK.

Until normal times arrive, supplies may be limited. So, treasure your INKEDUCT pens—they are valuable.

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